

Thomas Jefferson to Gouverneur Morris, June 16, 1792, from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO THE U. S. MINISTER TO FRANCE J. MSS. (GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.)

Philadelphia, June 16, 1792.

Dear Sir, —My last to you was of Mar. 28. Yours of Apr 6. & 15. came to hand three days ago.

With respect to the particular objects of commerce susceptible of being placed on a better footing, on which you ask my ideas they will shew themselves by the inclosed table of the situation of our commerce with France and England. That with France is stated as it stood at the time I left that country, when the only objects whereon change was still desireable, were those of salted provisions, tobacco & tar, pitch & turpentine. The first was in negotiation when I came away, & was pursued by Mr. Short with prospects of success till their general tariff so unexpectedly deranged our commerce with them as to other articles. Our commerce with their West Indies had never admitted amelioration during my stay in France. The temper of that period did not allow even the essay, and it was as much as we could do to hold the ground given us by the Marshal de Castries' *Arret* admitting us to their colonies with salted provisions &c. As to both these branches of commerce, to wit, with France & her colonies, we have hoped they would pursue their own proposition of arranging them by treaty, & that we could draw that treaty to this place. There is no other where the dependance of their colonies on our states for

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their prosperity is so obvious as here, nor where their negotiator would feel it so much. But it would be imprudent to leave to the uncertain issue of such a treaty, the reestablishment of our commerce with *France* on the footing on which it was in the beginning of their revolution. That treaty may be long on the anvil; in the meantime we cannot consent to the late innovations without taking measures to do justice to our own navigation. This object therefore is particularly recommended to you, while you will also be availing yourself of every opportunity which may arise of benefiting our commerce in any other part. I am in hopes you will have found the moment favorable on your arrival in France when M. Claviere was in the ministry and the dispositions of the National Assembly favorable to the ministers.—Your cypher has not been sent hitherto because it required a most confidential channel of conveyance. It is now committed to Mr. Pinckney, who also carries the gazettes, laws & other public papers for you. We have been long without any vessel going to Havre. Some of the Indian tribes have acceded to terms of peace. The greater part however still hold off, and oblige us to pursue more vigorous measures for war.—I inclose you an extract from a circular letter to our Consuls, by which

you will perceive that those in countries where we have no diplomatic representative, are desired to settle their accounts annually with the minister of the U. S. at Paris. This business I must desire you to undertake. The act concerning Consuls will be your guide, & I shall be glad that the 1st of July be the day to which their accounts shall be annually settled, & paid, and that they may be forwarded as soon after that as possible to the office of the Secretary of state, to enter into the general account of his department which it is necessary he should make up always before the meeting of Congress.

P. S. I have said nothing of our whale oil, because I believe it is on a better footing since the Tariff than before. I inclose you a letter from a person in Lyons to Mr. Short, desiring inquiries might be made after a M. de Sn. Pry, with the result of the inquiries. I am unable

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to say how you will find the letter writer, as I have no information but what is in the letter itself.